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Denver International Airport Celebrates 20 Years

When its construction began, Denver International Airport was the first major new U.S. airport to be built in two decades.

Now, it is celebrating its 20th anniversary and has realized the city's vision to

Air Service News

Spirit Airlines Will Fly to Los Angeles

Spirit Airlines will begin flying one daily roundtrip between Los Angeles (LAX) and Denver in April 2015.

Southwest Increasing Flights to Popular Destinations

Southwest will increase its service from Denver, beginning June 7, 2015. The new flights will be between Denver and Austin, Baltimore, Boston, Columbus, Houston (Hobby), Minneapolis-St. Paul, Orlando, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Portland, Raleigh-Durham, and Seattle.

Southwest Airlines’ added nonstop flights bring the airline’s current Denver market volume of 174 daily flights up to 185.

Southwest to Offer Weekly Flight to Albany in June

Once a week on Saturdays, effective June 7, 2015, nonstop service between Albany, N.Y. (ALB), and Denver begins on Southwest Airlines.
become a gateway for international travel and commerce, and it continues to be an airport with enormous potential. It can double its current capacity to remain competitive in the global aviation marketplace.

Justifying the confidence of voters and community leaders when it was planned, DIA has grown as predicted. From serving 31 million passengers in 1995, DIA established an all-time record of 53.4 million passengers in 2014. The airport remains positioned for growth at incrementally low costs, which will help maintain a competitive cost structure for air carriers while keeping up with growing demand.

DIA's impact on Colorado cannot be underestimated. It provides more than $26 billion every year to the state's economy, currently supporting nearly 190,000 jobs. Within this 20th anniversary year, the new Westin Denver International Airport hotel will open, and train service to the city center is scheduled to begin in 2016. Being able to be downtown in 35 minutes; having the convenience of at-terminal hotel rooms and business and conference facilities available will in themselves be terrific new services for DIA passengers. But these services coupled with a new outdoor plaza for arts and entertainment, expanded shopping and dining options, and increased attention to customers' needs, will be travel enhancements that have few peers among U.S. airports.

DIA is always poised to adopt new aviation technology. The airport was the nation's first to fully implement the Federal Aviation Administration's new NextGen arrival and departures procedures in 2013. It was also among the first airports to use new sensor technology to track and manage aircraft movement on the ground.

Denver International has more opportunity for commercial development than any other airport in the United States with 9,400 gross acres available, even after full build-out to 12 runways. And in the corridor along Peña Boulevard, public-private transit-oriented development is proceeding at a 400-acre site known as Peña Station. Panasonic Enterprise Solutions Company plans to build a 100,000-square-foot headquarters and light assembly facility there, which will help us develop Peña Station as a world-class showcase for sustainable community progress.

Denver International Airport did not have an easy birth. It was overdue by about 16 months. There were complications. There was a mixture of anxiety, expectation and guarded optimism. There was snow.

Push Night began the great deliverance, and airlines started to transfer equipment and personnel from Denver's 65-year-old municipal airport, Stapleton International, to the new airport at about 1 p.m. the afternoon of Feb. 27, 1995.

When about 4,500 pieces of equipment and 25 commercial jets began moving to new digs northeast of the city, the weather was a pleasant 62 degrees, but toward dusk, the temperature dropped 30 degrees and fog and freezing rain took over. Some snow removal vehicles and firefighting rigs stayed until all aircraft departed.

Continental Flight 34, a DC-10 bound for London (Gatwick) with 200 passengers, pushed back from Stapleton Gate C8 at about 9:38 p.m.—beating a GP Express flight as the airport's last departure. After the DC-10 pilot bid farewell to the Stapleton tower, the airport shut off its airfield lights. Remaining field crews moved lighted upright 'X's onto the runways and painted giant "X"s on the concrete to signal to any pilots who might have been confused about the location of the new airport (or stranded in the Himalayas or on a desert island for several years without news from civilization) that Stapleton was closed—for good.

Denver owed much to Stapleton. It was the city's easy connection to both coasts starting in 1937 when United Airlines brought the "mainline" air route to Denver, which cut transcontinental travel time from several days to about 24 hours. Stapleton was the inland port that Denver used for commerce and its link to international markets. Denver's airport never stopped growing—since its beginning as Denver Municipal Airport in 1929, its renaming to Stapleton in 1944, and the addition of International to the name in 1964. Continued growth, sometimes outpacing what the facility could reasonably accommodate, ultimately put Stapleton at a crossroads: expand to improve airfield capacity or continue without enlarging borders and building new runways. The latter would keep Stapleton in the same category as most U.S. airports: functional but with limited or no space to handle projected increases in passenger volumes and flights.
To the credit of metropolitan elected officials, led by Denver Mayor Federico Peña and Adams County commissioners, they had the vision not only to solve local aviation's immediate needs but also position the region to have an airport that could grow incrementally throughout decades in response to market demand. Thus, a new airport was conceived, and it arrived early morning Feb. 28, 1995.
United Flight 1474 from Colorado Springs, bearing Elrey Jeppesen and other dignitaries, landed on Denver International's Runway 35L before dawn on Feb. 28, becoming the first scheduled commercial flight into the new airport. An Associated Press photographer captured the silhouette of this flight's Boeing 737 jet as it passed in front of the brightly lit terminal. It was a picture that appeared in newspapers around the world. Welcoming the flight via radio from the control tower was U.S. Transportation Secretary Federico Peña (he also presided at Stapleton's tower for the last flight out). Disembarking from flight 1474 at a Concourse B gate, was Jeppesen, age 88, who was the first passenger to arrive. "This is pretty exciting to me, since I remember landing on grass strips," Jeppesen told a reporter.
9News anchors Adele Arakawa and Ed Sardella broadcast live from Denver International Airport on Feb. 28, 1995, the day the airport opened. Other Denver television stations also broadcast live and these local journalists were joined by approximately 1,800 other members of the media that day.

Denver International Airport opened in a snowstorm and was able to operate with minimal delays. The first flight to depart was United 1062 to Kansas City, which left at 6 a.m.

The *Rocky Mountain News* published a diary of the first day at DEN (the airport identifier code).

8:55 a.m. - In the Buff, a men’s a capella choir from the University of Colorado, serenades arriving passengers. The choir, hired by Frontier Airlines, sings a parody of “Oh What a Night,” a hit song by the Four Seasons. A few verses:
"Oh what a flight
DIA has hit the new Frontier
And you don't have to wait another year.
What an airport, what a sight.

Oh what a flight
DIA is gonna be such fun.
Two bag systems for the price of one
Or maybe three, or four or five.

Oh what a flight
Once a twinkle in Federico's eye
Now the airport that they call DIA.
What an airport, what a sight.""

At 7:37 a.m., two United Airlines Boeing 757s, and a Continental Airlines B-727 made aviation history when they landed simultaneously on three parallel runways at DEN.

A mariachi band serenaded passengers as Mexicana Airlines boarded its flight to Mazatlan—the airport's first international departure. A Martinair Holland flight pulled in around 1 p.m., bringing passengers from Amsterdam and becoming DEN's first international arrival.

Twenty years later, Denver International Airport is forging ahead, continuously exploring new sources of non-airline revenue, and striving to offer the best possible travel experience to its passengers.

Milestones of Denver International Airport's 20 Years

- On opening day, despite low ceilings and snow, there are no delays. Planes landed at a rate of 92 per hour during peak traffic, almost three times the...
volume of planes that could have landed at Stapleton under the same conditions. Kru Kruger, Denver flight operations manager for United Airlines is quoted in the *Rocky Mountain News*: "Nobody is circling to land, nobody's waiting in Omaha to take off because of delays in Denver."

- October 29, 1995, Air Canada begins flights at DEN
- June 20-22, 1997, Denver hosts Summit of the Eight, and heads of state arrive at the airport in a variety of aircraft, including a Concorde and Ilyushin
- Sept. 1, 1998, British Airways inaugurates nonstop flight from DEN to London (Gatwick)
- March 25, 2001, Lufthansa starts nonstop service to Frankfurt
- Sept. 4, 2003, Sixth runway (16,000 feet long) opens
- Jan. 23, 2006, Southwest Airlines begins operating at Denver International Airport
- April 24, 2007, New 16-gate regional jet facility opens at B Gates
- Aug. 26, 2010, RTD breaks ground for East Rail Line station as part of the Hotel and Transit Center Program
- May 11, 2012, Icelandair connects Denver and Reykjavik nonstop
- June 9, 2012, Frontier Airlines opens the Caribbean market to Denver with nonstop flight to Punta Cana, Dominican Republic
- June 10, 2013, Denver gets its first nonstop flight to Asia when United provides air link to Tokyo
- May 22, 2014, Denver Mayor Hancock places the last bolt of the last steel beam for the new Westin hotel at a “topping out” ceremony
- Nov. 1, 2014, five new gates open at Concourse C
- Dec. 3, 2014, United begins nonstop service between Denver and Panama City

**Denver International Airport Sets Record for Passenger Traffic**

**International Passenger Traffic Continues to Soar in Denver**

2014 was the busiest year in Denver aviation history. December's 4.4 million air travelers at Denver International Airport brought last year's total passenger traffic to 53.4 million—an increase of 1.7 percent over the 52.6 million passengers who used the airport in 2013. The previous record for the airport was set in 2012, with 53.2 million passengers.

Additionally, DIA set six monthly passenger volume records in 2014: January, February, April, May, September and October.
DIA also had more international passenger traffic in 2014 than any other year, with a total of 2.21 million international passengers. The previous all-time high for international traffic in Denver was set in 2008 with 2.20 million passengers. Overall international passenger traffic at DIA increased 12 percent over 2013, and December 2014 marked the 32nd consecutive month of international passenger growth at DIA.

DIA served an all-time high of 191 destinations around the world during 2014, surpassing the 187 destinations served during 2013. New air service in 2014 included nonstop service to Panama City, Panama, as well as Guadalajara and Chihuahua, Mexico.

**Garage Expansion to Add 1,795 Parking Spaces at Denver International Airport**

The number of public parking spaces at Denver International Airport will grow by nearly 1,800 with the addition of a new parking structure on the southeast side of
Construction of the new four-story parking structure is scheduled to begin this month and is expected to take about two years to complete at an estimated cost of about $46 million. Swinerton Builders will build the project, which will be paid with monies from the airport's Capital Improvement Program fund.

Separately, the airport is nearing completion on an additional 261 parking spaces adjacent to the north end of the east parking garage. An additional 430 spaces were recently added to the east and west economy lots through a redesign of the current layout.

After the garage is built, DIA will offer 19,496 garage parking spaces, bringing its total of all public parking spaces to 43,275. The airport continuously evaluates its parking needs, and is adding the additional spaces to meet growing demand.

The projects are part of a package of upgrades aimed at improving the experience for DIA's parking customers. In 2014 the airport added reserved parking spaces in the east and west parking garages (available at www.DIAreservedparking.com), and electric vehicle charging stations were installed in late 2013. DIA also recently completed a project that retrofit more than 5,400 lights in the existing parking garages with energy-efficient LED fixtures to improve lighting and reduce energy consumption.

New 'Grab and Go' Food Options at Denver International Airport's Concourse C Expansion

Travelers have new local and national food options at C Gates, in the new expansion area for Southwest Airlines. Happy Cakes Café, Say Si Bon! Marketplace and Auntie Anne's opened this month near gate C26.

“We are excited to welcome local Colorado companies, such as Happy Cakes Café featuring Allegro Coffee, and national brands like Say Si Bon! Marketplace and Auntie Anne's to appeal to the 'grab and go' market with snack foods, pastries and a variety of beverages,” said Neil Maxfield, DIA's senior vice president of concessions.
food options. Happy Cakes has locations in Denver and Longmont, and Allegro Coffee is based in Thornton. Happy Cakes is a certified Airport Concessions Disadvantaged Business Enterprise, and Denver International Airport is the company's first foray into the airport market.

Say Si Bon!, a playful take on the French phrase "C'est si bon" (it's so good!) resembles an inviting European market and offers a broad assortment of products that passengers especially want. You can find essentials, such as newspapers, magazines and travel accessories, plus local souvenirs, branded apparel, and electronic paraphernalia. Say Si Bon! offers prepackaged sandwiches, salads and pastries, all made fresh daily on-site to ensure travelers get the best products possible.

Passengers using five new Southwest Airlines gates at Concourse C now have the convenience of Say Si Bon! and Auntie Anne's Pretzels®. Say Si Bon! resembles an European market and offers food and other travel items.

Returning to DIA is Auntie Anne's® Pretzels, now located within Say Si Bon! Auntie Anne's® Pretzels is an award-winning franchise system that is owned by FOCUS Brands Inc. It received the 2014 Technomic's Chain Restaurant Consumers' Choice Award for “craveability,” ranked number one in the category of hand-rolled soft pretzels by Entrepreneur Magazine's Franchise 500, and was granted the World-Class Franchise® honor (the most prestigious award in franchising) for the past seven years.

Denver International Airport Looking to Reclaim Great Hall

The Great Hall (or atrium) in the center of Jeppesen Terminal is how millions of people experience Denver for the first time. In many ways, it's the airport's front door. But the use of that space has changed dramatically since Sept. 11, 2001, and the creation of the Transportation Security Administration. That's why DIA has requested qualifications from potential partners within the private sector who are interested and capable of providing proposals to redevelop the Great Hall.
The Jeppesen Terminal Great Hall, or atrium, at Denver International Airport functions much differently than it did when the airport opened in 1995. Most of the atrium now has been taken over by Transportation Security Administration passenger screening lanes and equipment. So what used to be pleasant areas with trees and seating and a much quieter ambiance is now crowded with people and noise. The airport has asked for qualifications from capable firms that can propose solutions to reclaim the hall.

This project is primarily focused on enhancing the overall passenger experience, as well as developing new sources of non-airline revenue that could include shops, restaurants and other passenger amenities. Although Denver International has not committed to any specific plan—and at several points along the way if it doesn't make sense to continue, the airport could decide not to move forward—it is actively seeking qualified partners from around the world who can help redefine the passenger experience in the atrium. The project would likely move the TSA checkpoints from their current locations to reclaim the Great Hall as the amazing public space that it once was. Redevelopment could help move travelers more efficiently, and create new opportunities to showcase the Mile High City as a world-class destination. The airport hopes to identify a list of potential partners this spring.

Spare Change Donation Program for the Homeless Continues to Soar

Two years ago, Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock was the first person to donate spare change at a Denver International Airport security screening checkpoint to help the homeless. Since then, thousands of generous passengers have added their contributions, which have continued to soar.

From February 2014 to Jan. 31, 2015, spare change has brought in more than $88,000 in donations. This is $6,000 more compared to the first year. Over two years, more than $170,000 has been raised at the airport to support homeless programs in Denver.

"By donating to Denver's Road Home through the DIA receptacles, the city and our community partners are able to provide needed services such as job training, sheltering, mental health and substance abuse treatment as well as other supportive services to help the homeless get back on their feet," said Mayor Hancock.

Denver's Road Home is a city program intended to help the homeless move to self-sufficiency. In addition to several change collection containers located downtown,
there are a total of four containers at the airport: one located before the south security screening checkpoint, one before the north security screening checkpoint and two before the A-security screening checkpoint.

“We continue to get requests from other airports interested in learning more about this successful program, and are proud to have made a difference in our community,” said Denver International Airport CEO, Kim Day.

Video of the Mayor donating change can be viewed by clicking on this link: www.youtube.com.

**Denver International Airport Hosts Routes Americas**

*The Mile High City Welcomed 600 Aviation Professionals, 80 Airlines and nearly 300 Airports from Around the World to Global Conference*

Denver International Airport hosted hundreds of aviation professionals at the eighth Routes Americas conference, the airline route development forum for the entire Americas region. The conference, held Feb. 1-3., was in the United States for the first time.

Routes Americas is the essential event for all aviation-based companies who wish to conduct business to, from and within the region. Bringing together a range of airlines, airports, tourism authorities, economic development and other industry stakeholders, including some of the largest carriers from North, Central and Latin America, this event offers attendees the opportunity to meet with some of the most influential aviation professionals from across the Americas region.

"It is certainly an exciting time to be in Denver with the airport celebrating its 20th anniversary in February," Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock told conference attendees on Feb. 2. "This conference positions us in the center of the dynamic aviation industry, and by continuing to build these relationships we will be closer to achieving our goal of expanded global connectivity for Denver."

On the conference's first day, Denver International Airport CEO Kim Day greeted the audience and said, “Denver International Airport is proud to be the first U.S. city to host this significant global aviation conference.”

Day noted that the conference provided an unparalleled opportunity to showcase Denver and Colorado to a key target audience of domestic and international air carriers and she emphasized: “Site visits by airlines have proven to be one of our most effective air-service-development tools.”

**Traveling the Silk Road Exhibit at Denver's Museum of Nature and Science**
“If it is said that a paradise is to be seen in this world, then the paradise of this world is Samarkand.”
’Ata-Malik Juvaini, *The History of the World-Conqueror*

Samarkand. There's something about the name that evokes the exotic. Say the name and there are echoes of great caravans.

Located in a large oasis in the Zerafshan River valley in northeastern Uzbekistan, Samarkand evolved as a waypoint along the Silk Road and became a great city of commerce—a city where different peoples and cultures crossed paths. Marco Polo in his book *The Travels of Marco Polo the Venetian* wrote, “Samarcan is a noble city, adorned with beautiful gardens, and surrounded by a plain, in which are produced all the fruits that man can desire.”
Above are three images that represent the Chinese city of Xi'an. Left, are the cocoons of silkworms from which silk threads are derived. Upper right is a photograph of the city, and lower right is an image of some of the thousands of terracotta warriors that were buried near Xi'an about 210 B.C. to protect Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China, in his afterlife.

The experience of Samarkand has been brought to life through a new exhibition at Denver’s Museum of Nature and Science called Traveling the Silk Road. Samarkand is one of five Silk Road cities that the exhibit highlights when it takes visitors on a 5,700-mile journey across blazing deserts and snowy mountain passes. The journey along the Silk Road begins at Xi'an, ancient capital of China. The next stop is at an oasis in remote western China, located in a below-sea-level valley: Turfan. The Silk Road then leads to Baghdad, the scholarly center of the Islamic world, and finally to Constantinople (now Istanbul), eastern capital of the Roman Empire.

Traveling the Silk Road brings to life the most celebrated trade route in human history through evocative sights, sounds, scents, and objects. The route's name is derived from silk moving from market to market, traded or purchased as a valuable commodity. In Xi'an and other Chinese cities, mulberry trees and the silkworms that feed on their leaves were cultivated to produce this shiny fabric, coveted around the world (one source says that to produce 1 kilogram of silk (2.2 pounds), 3,000 silkworms must eat 229 pounds of mulberry leaves. It takes about 5,000 silkworm cocoons and their silk fibers to make a pure silk kimono).
The image shows the location of three of the important commercial cities along the Silk Road: Samarkand, Turfan and Xi'an. Image copied from the Denver Museum of Nature and Science website.

The exhibit is an immersive experience of the route's golden age from 600 to 1200 A.D. You see live silkworms and a replica of a massive silk loom. You meet various characters along the route, such as Marco Polo, Tang Dynasty emperors, traders, bandits, merchants, intellectuals, and pilgrims. You smell the sought-after fragrances of patchouli, jasmine and rosewater, plus the heady spice aromas of cloves, nutmeg, and turmeric. You see market specialties of fur, wine and dyes, as well artifacts of gold and glass. You can examine a model of a 71-foot-long Arab dhow (sailing boat), split to reveal a cargo of ceramics.

"Traveling the Silk Road," the Museum says, "tells stories of the mighty and the meek, of wars and peace, of scholarship and commerce, of the ancient pathway that led to the modern world."

The Bibi-Khanym Mosque in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Inset: a camel caravan—a common sight along the Silk Road. This mosque was not built during the golden age of the Silk Road, so merchants traveling between 600 and 1400 A.D. would not have seen it. Samarkand photo by David Stanley, Canada, through Wikimedia Commons.

Take an online journey before visiting the Silk Road. The exhibit runs through May 3,
Airport Quiz